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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Spirit of God, descend on our hearts, for apart from You, life is a tale full of sound and fury signifying nothing.

May our Senators walk in Your ways, keeping Your precepts with such integrity that they will honor You. Lord, incline their hearts to Your wisdom, providing them with the understanding they need to accomplish Your purpose in our world. Let Your mercy protect them from the dangers of this life as they learn to find delight in Your commandments. Keep them ever mindful of the brevity of their days and the greatness of their work.

We pray in Your Holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PAUL). The majority leader is recognized.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to H.R. 240.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 5, H.R. 240, a bill making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, it was good to see the new Senate come together and pass another bipartisan bill yesterday. It was a win for our Nation's heroes. It was yet another win for the American people. But that was only one of the votes we took because just hours after joining Republicans to do something good for our veterans, Democrats voted to block funding for the Department of Homeland Security. It was enough to give anyone whiplash.

Now Americans are wondering, what could possibly lead Democrats to filibuster Homeland Security funding? The legislation Democrats are filibustering would fund the Department of Homeland Security. It would also protect American democracy from overreach, described by President Obama as "unwise and unfair." That is it. You would think that a bill such as this would pass overwhelmingly. You would think that at least the Democrats would allow the Senate an opportunity to improve the bill if it needs to be improved. But Democrats voted to filibuster the bill outright. They prevented the legislation from even being debated.

Today's Democratic Party seems willing to go to any extreme to protect the kind of Executive overreach President Obama once described as "not how our democracy functions." It would go so far as to block Homeland Security funding and to give the President the opportunity to continue to do what he is doing.

The whole situation is a bit perplexing given what some of our colleagues said just a few weeks ago, given what they said about the overreach President Obama referred to as "ignoring the law." One Democratic Senator said that "the President shouldn't make such significant policy changes on his own." Another Senator

claimed he was "concerned about the constitutional separation of powers." He said, "The Constitution doesn't say if the Congress fails to act then the President can do x, y, and z. It just doesn't." A third Democratic Senator had this to say of the President's plan for overreach: "It makes me uncomfortable." Yet all of these Senators voted to shut down debate and block funding for the Department of Homeland Security. Every last Democrat voted to filibuster rather than work across the aisle to address the very issue they claim to be concerned about.

Perhaps today's Democratic Party is so devoted to the right of politicians to engage in action that would, as the President seemed to imply, "violate the law," that it cannot tolerate dissent. But that is no reason to shut down the Department of Homeland Security. That is no reason to prevent the Senate from even debating whether to fund the Department.

So the Democrats' Homeland Security filibuster needs to end now. Democratic Senators who say they are serious about keeping our Nation safe and addressing what President Obama acknowledged as "unwise and unfair" overreach need to prove it.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, yesterday we were informed of another barbaric act by ISIS—literally burning a Jordanian pilot to death in a cage. This follows news reports of beheadings of Japanese citizens, Americans, and so many others. It is an indication of the threat not just to the Middle East but to the world of terrorism in its extreme, as ISIS demonstrates on a regular basis.

It was ironic that the same day we learned this, I visited the Department of Homeland Security and met with the Secretary, Jeh Johnson, and talked about the political strategy of the Republicans when it comes to funding the

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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